

ITEM #: 7  
DATE: 09-21-16

## COMMISSION ACTION FORM

**REQUEST:**      **PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR 5871 ONTARIO STREET (BIRCH MEADOWS SUBDIVISION)**

**BACKGROUND:**

D&R Furman LLC is the property owner of 5871 Ontario Street and requests approval of a Preliminary Plat for a major subdivision of a 33.57 acre site. The property is located on the north side of Ontario, and South of the Union Pacific Railroad Line. The City Council approved a rezoning request from Agricultural (A) zoning to Suburban Residential Low Density (FS-RL) with a Master Plan on July 26, 2016. (*See Attachment B – Master Plan*).

The proposed Preliminary Plat is a layout of 74 single-family home lots (*See Attachment C*) The Preliminary Plat includes three Outlots for open space. The design includes the construction of six public streets, four of them as extensions of existing public streets from the east in existing development and two new public streets traversing the site from north to south. The frontage of Ontario Street must be improved as part of the subdivision frontage of the project and this includes extension of the existing sidewalk, street, and utilities.

The 74 single-family home lots will be accessed from Oregon Avenue, Tennessee Street, Maryland Street, Missouri Street, Kansas Drive and Ohio Street. There is one access point proposed from Ontario Street leading into the subdivision. The developer located Oregon Avenue in response to staff's comments about ensuring there is a matching lot orientation to the existing homes to the east and for block spacing requirements of FS-RL zoning. The extension of Missouri Street has exceeded the overall block length limitation of 660 feet and requires the installation of a sidewalk leading from Missouri Street south to Ontario Street. This satisfies a requirement for a mid-block connection to the rest of the subdivision leading south to Ontario Street.

The lots are generally consistent in size with larger lots located along the perimeter of the subdivision and smaller lots in the center. The lots range in size between .16 and .55 acres. All lots meet minimum size requirements and frontage requirements for the FS-RL zoning district. There is one through lot proposed (Lot 37) due to the presence of Ontario Street as a Minor Arterial Street. The majority of lots are configured with lots across from another lot with a handful of lots oriented perpendicular (Lots 34, 35 and 36) to the side streets off of the newly constructed Oregon Avenue.

There are three Outlots in the proposed subdivision, which total 8.05 acres. The Outlots will function as open space, storm water system and detention and utility easement

areas with Outlot C being devoted solely to open space. Additionally, there will be a path connection from Outlot B to Missouri Street along a property line with a storm sewer easement to create a pedestrian access from Missouri Street south to Ontario Street. The west boundary of the site is also subject to a 100 foot stream buffer requirement as part of the storm water management plan. This area is part of a common open space area within outlot A.

The rezoning of the site in July 2016, included a Master Plan (*See Attachment B - Master Plan*) defining the general arrangement of uses and conditions for development of the site. The Preliminary Plat must be found to conform to the Master Plan land use descriptions. Staff finds that the Preliminary Plat is consistent with the approved Master Plan proposed layout due to the arrangement of development and conservation areas within the proposed subdivision. Additionally, the project meets the minimum density requirement at 3.75 units per acre with development of between 70 and 80 single family homes and a minimum of 10% of the site as required open space.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend the City Council approve the preliminary plat for Birch Meadows Subdivision.
2. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend City Council deny the preliminary plat for Birch Meadows Subdivision, if the Commission determines the design does not meet the standards of the Municipal Code.
3. The City Council can defer action on this request and refer it back to City staff and/or the applicant for additional information.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

The proposed single-family lot layout integrates with the existing single-family homes to the east with its alignment of streets and orientation of lots. Although extended block lengths and through lots are not desirable to the City, staff finds the proposed single-family home lot layout acceptable due to the existing circumstances and proposed pedestrian connections. The general concern for the through lot is the lack of planned buffering and landscaping along the backside of the lot and the potential affect on livability. However, the proposed lot is large enough to allow for homeowners to decoratively landscape and fence the rear property line if they desire. It also follows the pattern of homes that exist to the east of the site.

Therefore, the Department of Planning and Housing recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission act in accordance with Alternative #1.

## **ADDENDUM**

**Project Description.** The Preliminary Plat of “Birch Meadows Subdivision” includes 74 single family lots for development, (public street right-of-way to be dedicated to the City) and, three Outlots (Outlots A, B, C,). Outlot A (4.47 acres) is to be used as public open space and includes a storm water feature. Outlot B (3.33 acres) is indicated as an open space with a sidewalk encircling a stormwater feature and leading to the north perimeter of the lot and Outlot C (.25 acres) is shown as open space at the point where Kansas Drive and Ohio Street meet. *(See Attachment C - Preliminary Plat)*

The main access for the development is Ontario Street will intersect with the new Oregon Avenue. The proposed Plat includes the construction of Oregon Avenue, which provides direct access to three single-family lots as well as access directly to Ontario Street. Oregon Avenue is designed to allow for a north to south roadway without causing the current homes along existing east to west streets to become unintended corner lots. The remaining 71 lots will gain frontage and driveway access from Ohio Street and extensions of Kansas Drive, Missouri Street, Maryland Street and Tennessee Street from the east into the proposed development.

The proposed subdivision contains one double frontage through lot, which is located between Tennessee Street and Ontario Street. The double frontage lot can be justified in this instance as Ontario Street is a minor arterial and as such Sec. 23.401(3)(b) allows for a reverse or double frontage style lot to separate residential development or to overcome specific challenges with regard to topography. Given the current layout of nearby streets and existing development to the east of the current site staff deemed the double frontage lot along Tennessee Street as acceptable to provide for the most logical subdivision design as well as limiting additional double frontage lots to the west.

**Density.** The total development area of the subdivision is 19.06 acres with lots that range in size from .16 acres to .55 acres. Density calculations have been based on net area consistent with the allowance for the FS-RL zone, by subtracting out of the gross lot area the total area to be held as Outlots and land in the subdivision that will be dedicated to the city as public street right-of-way for the proposed streets. With a total net area of 19.06 acres the net density of 74 proposed single family homes is 3.78 dwelling units per net acre. This meets the minimum required net density of 3.75 dwelling units per net acre of the FS-RL Zone.

**Public Improvements.** The internal streets are all public and designed to the City's local street requirements for a 26-foot paved street section within a 55-foot right-of-way. The Ontario Street frontage of the site is not improved to City standards and is requires improvements as part of the project. Ontario Street will be improved to a three lane design extending from the east property line of the proposed subdivision to the west property line abutting Ontario Street. The three lane extension matches the improvements to the east and follows City standards for matching the design of abutting infrastructure and extending it through a developed site. The design of the site does not require a specific turn lane configuration for the Oregon intersection. The proposed

Ontario Street improvements are adequate to meet transportation needs of the subdivision and the pass by traffic along the frontage. The sidewalk will also be extended along the full frontage of the site and connect to the pathway the extends through and within outlot B that is located along Ontario Street.

**Water.** An existing 16" water main connection is located at the south east corner of the site along Ontario Street. The 16" water main will be required to be extended fully to the west property line of the site to meet City standards of matching and extending existing infrastructure through new development. The 16" main reflects the intent to extend this major line to the west for eventual looping of the line to the south to interconnect this area of the City.

**Sanitary Sewer.** A sanitary sewer main connection is available at the south east end of the proposed plat along Ontario Street which will provide sanitary sewer service to the entire development. The City has concluded that sanitary sewer capacity is available to serve the proposed subdivision.

**Transit.** Cy Ride currently has a bus turnaround location at the intersection of Ontario Street and California Avenue which is located east of this site approximately 700 feet from the proposed intersection with Oregon Avenue. Cy Ride currently has no plans to extend service beyond that point. As such this subdivision will not have direct CyRide service from within the subdivision. Pedestrian access to the California Drive CyRide stop is available from the proposed subdivision site.

**Sidewalks, Pedestrian Trails and Street Trees.** A street tree planting plan has been submitted that includes street trees planted along all proposed streets within the development. Chapter 23 of the Municipal Code, requires street trees for residential subdivisions along both sides of the street at a spacing of 30-50 feet on center to allow for the growth of the tree canopy, however, adjusted spacing is permitted by the code for obstructions in the right of way including driveway locations, underground utilities, and the location of street lights. Adequate spacing is available in most areas for street tree planting on the proposed plat. Sidewalks are proposed on both sides of all proposed streets as well as a sidewalk along Ontario Street that can be accessed from the north at two separate locations connecting to the rest of the sidewalk network of the development. Missouri Street exceeds the 660 foot maximum for block length between Ohio Avenue and Oregon Avenue per Municipal Code requirements in 23.403. A sidewalk extending from Missouri Street south to Ontario Street within a 7' pedestrian easement along lot lines as proposed satisfies the requirement for a mid-block pedestrian connection in the event that a block length exceeds 660 feet, thus allowing for the current block length of Missouri Street to comply.

**Open Space and Pedestrian Connections.** Open Space areas are proposed by the applicant for the subdivision with the creation of the three Outlots for a total of 8.05 acres of open space proposed for the development. The FS zoning requires that 10% of the gross development area be designated as common open space which is intended

for usable outdoor area for the residents of the development. Outlot A will feature open space for use by residents of the development. Outlot B contains sidewalk throughout the lot and encircling a water detention feature. Outlot C will feature usable open space for residents of the development. Staff would consider Outlots A, B and C as usable open space for the development for a total of 8.05 acres or 23.98% of the gross area of the development which meets the minimum requirement.

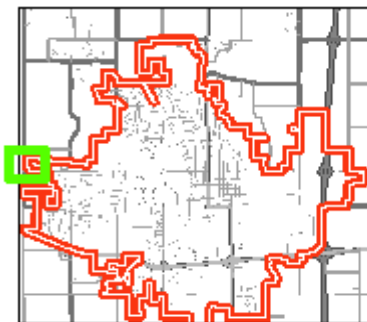
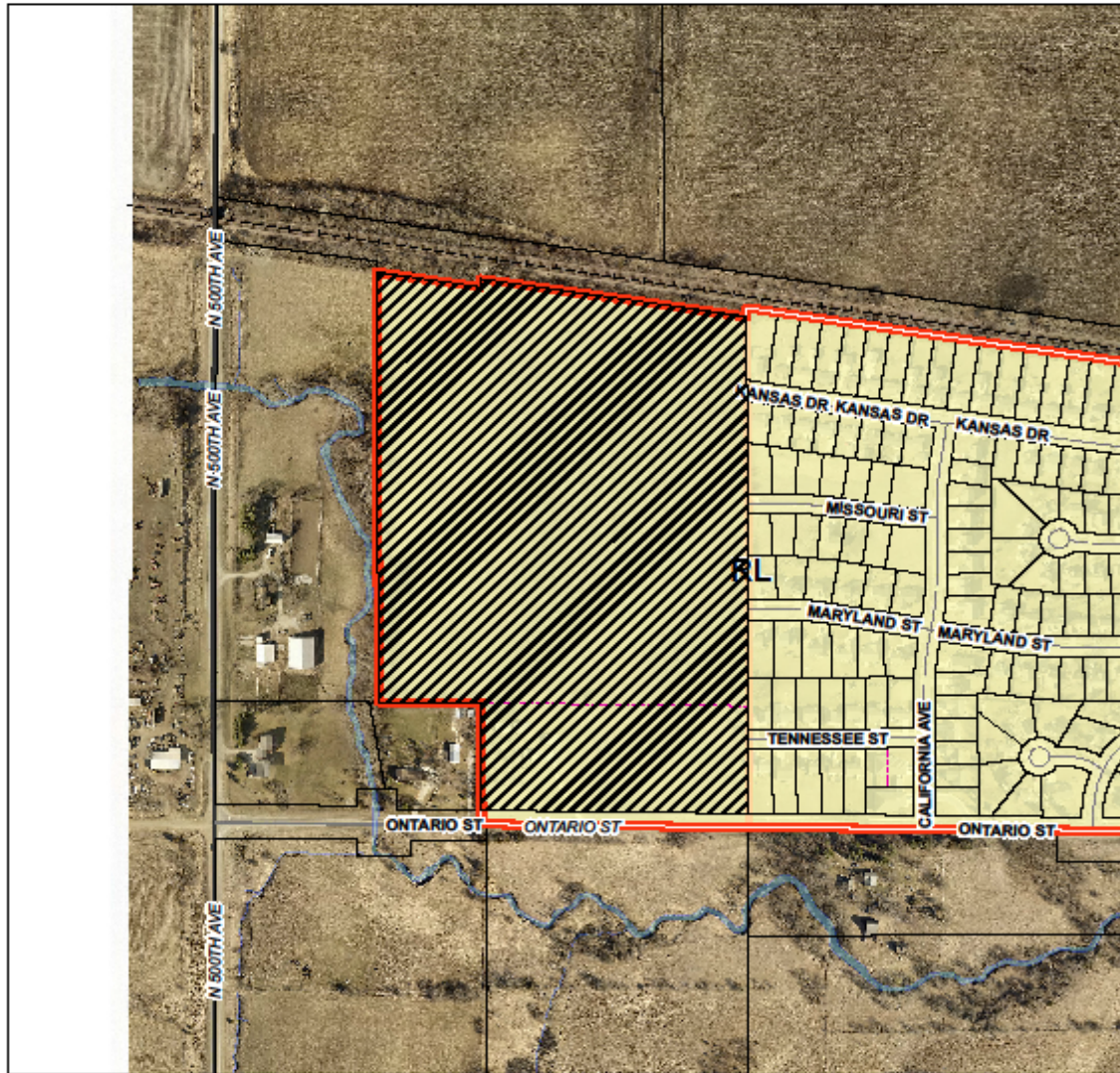
A residential sidewalk is planned for the area along the property lines of Lot 29, 30, 44, 45, 53 and 54 within a 7-foot pedestrian access easement from Outlot B north to Missouri Drive with a cross connection to the north side of Missouri Drive.

**Storm Water Management.** The Public Works Department has reviewed the submitted Storm Water Management Plan for this subdivision and has determined that the storm water detention as proposed will be sufficient for the projected needs of the development. The stormwater from the proposed development area will be handled via a detention basin on Outlot A and three separate detention basins located on Outlot B. The Plan also includes the mandatory stream buffer and conservation area along the west property line.

**Applicable Law.** Laws pertinent to the proposal are described on *Attachment D – Applicable Law*. Pertinent for the Planning and Zoning Commission are Sections 23.302(3) and 23.302(4).

**Public Notice.** Notice was mailed to property owners within 200 feet of the subject site and a sign was posted on the subject property. As of this writing, no comments have been received.

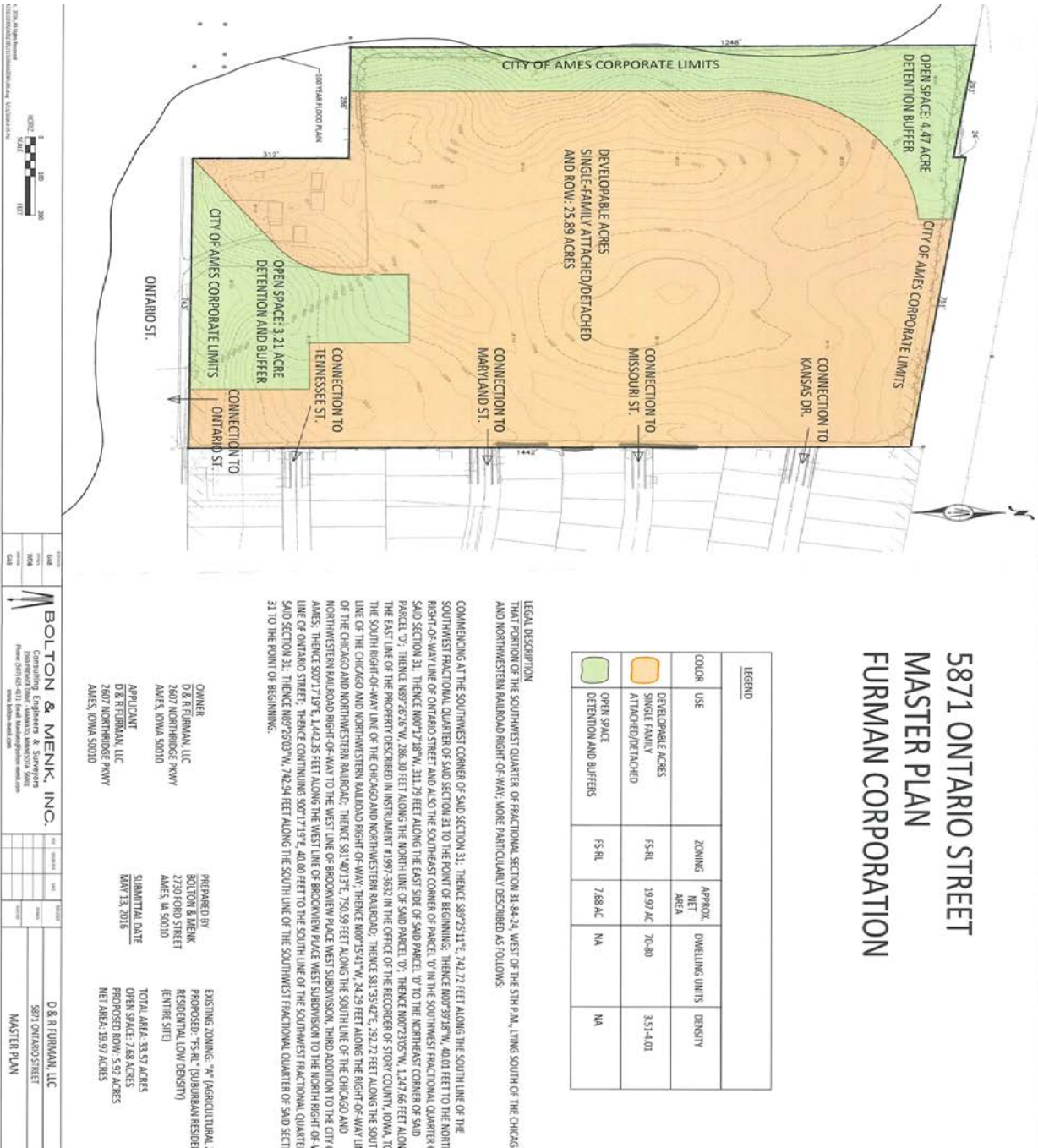
## Attachment A- Location and Zoning Map



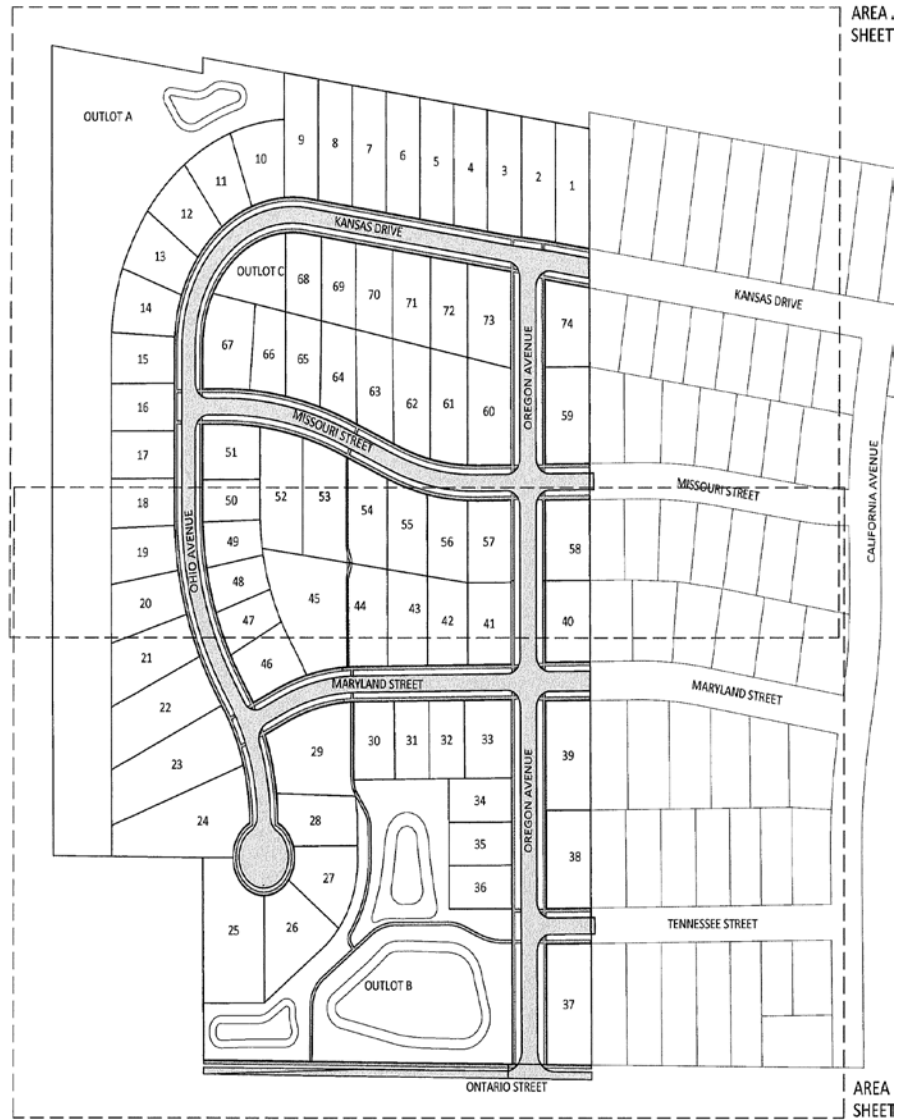
**5871 Ontario Street**  
**Birch Meadows Subdivision**  
**Preliminary Plat**



Attachment B-Master Plan



## Attachment C- Preliminary Plat



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## **Attachment D- Applicable Law**

The laws applicable to this Preliminary Plat Subdivision include, but are not limited to, the following: (verbatim language is shown in *italics*, other references are paraphrased):

Code of Iowa Chapter 354, Section 8 requires that the governing body shall determine whether the subdivision conforms to its Land Use Policy Plan.

Ames Municipal Code Chapter 23, Subdivisions, Division I, outlines the general provisions for subdivisions within the City limits and within two miles of the City limits of Ames.

Ames Municipal Code Section 23.302(3):

*(3) Planning and Zoning Commission Review:*

- (a) The Planning and Zoning Commission shall examine the Preliminary Plat, any comments, recommendations or reports assembled or made by the Department of Planning and Housing, and such other information as it deems necessary or desirable to consider.*
- (b) Based upon such examination, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall ascertain whether the Preliminary Plat conforms to relevant and applicable design and improvement standards in these Regulations, to other City ordinances and standards, to the City's Land Use Policy Plan, and to the City's other duly adopted Plans.*

Ames Municipal Code Section 23.302(4):

- (4) Planning and Zoning Commission Recommendation: Following such examination and within 30 days of the regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission at which a complete Application is first formally received for consideration, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall forward a report including its recommendation to the City Council. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall set forth its reasons for any recommendation to disapprove or to modify any Preliminary Plat in its report to the City Council and shall provide a written copy of such reasons to the developer.*